

Partnership for a Drug-Free America®

Partnership Attitude Tracking Study

Spring 2000

Teens in Grades 7 through 12

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Our Mission

Each year in America, millions of children are faced with a decision – a decision about using drugs. Our job is to help children make the right choice.

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America® (PDFA) is a coalition of communications professionals – from advertising, the media industry, public relations, research companies, actors guilds and production companies – dedicated to one mission: to use the power of mass media to reduce demand for illegal drugs. Our mission unfolds primarily in the form of a research-based national advertising campaign, now in its 13th year, created by hundreds of volunteers who comprise the Partnership. Through the generosity of our partners, the Partnership's ad campaign has generated some 600 advertisements and approximately \$3 billion in pro bono media exposure since 1987.

With a diversity of private sector funders supporting our work, the Partnership is beholden to no special interest, has no political agenda and supports no commercial concern. Our singular concern is reducing drug use among children.

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America® Today

A pioneer in the field of consumer social marketing, the Partnership for a Drug-Free America® (PDFA) is perhaps best known for its national advertising campaign. The Partnership's more than 13 years of experience and its national model have become the foundation on which similar and larger issue-oriented media campaigns have been built.

The Partnership is comprised of a small staff and hundreds of volunteers from the communications industry who create and disseminate the organization's advertising. Advertising agencies create Partnership messages pro bono; talent unions permit their members to work for free; production professionals bring Partnership messages to life; a network of advertising professionals distribute the group's work to national and local media; public relations firms lend services to various Partnership projects; and media companies donate valuable broadcast time and print space to deliver Partnership messages to millions of Americans.

The organization began in 1986 with seed money provided by the American Association of Advertising Agencies. Today, the Partnership receives major funding from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and support from more than 200 corporations and companies. PDFA accepts no funding from manufacturers of alcohol and/or tobacco products. PDFA's first ad appeared in March 1987, and to date our volunteers have created some 600 anti-drug ads. From March 1987 through the end of 1999, the total value of broadcast time and print space donated to Partnership messages topped \$3 billion, making this the largest public service media campaign in advertising history.

The Partnership is now participating in an unprecedented public/private marketing effort – the largest ever undertaken in the United States – that is redefining public service advertising. Backed by an average annual appropriation of about \$190 million¹ and with bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress, the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign has become the centerpiece of the country's efforts to reduce demand for illegal drugs. Rolled out nationally in July 1998, the effort is taking several directions, but at its core the campaign is tapping into the enormous power of mass media through the Partnership's national advertising campaign. The bulk of federal monies appropriated for this program were specifically earmarked for the one thing that eluded PDFA's campaign in the early and mid-1990s – consistent, targeted and optimal national media exposure for anti-drug advertising.

The Partnership, which receives no funding for its role in this campaign, is the primary provider of advertising to this federally-backed effort. The advertising industry – which is and has been the heart and soul of the Partnership – continues to create our messages for free. All PDFA messages are made available to the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign.

¹ 1998 appropriation: \$195 million; 1999 appropriation: \$185 million; 2000 appropriation: \$185 million.

The campaign is being coordinated by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, under the direction of General Barry McCaffrey, in cooperation with PDFA. Working with General McCaffrey and Congress, the campaign is commanding as much exposure as many leading commercial advertisers, and returning outstanding value to U.S. taxpayers. For every dollar the government spends on media exposure, media companies are asked to donate equivalent value through additional advertising exposure, storylines in programming or in other creative ways. To date, the matching component of the campaign has leveraged substantial added media exposure for the campaign.

In addition to its work on the national level, the Partnership has helped create 54 state- and city-based versions of its national advertising campaign through its State/City Alliance Program. Working with state/city governments and locally-based drug prevention organizations, the Partnership provides – at no cost – the guidance, on-site technical assistance and creative materials necessary to shape a multimedia campaign tailored to local needs. Several additional alliances are targeted for launch, which will expand the program's reach to 98 percent of U.S. television households.

The Partnership is a prevention organization. Its messages seek to reinforce behavior among teens and pre-teens that do not use drugs; to prevent drug experimentation and initiation; and to persuade non-addicted users to stop. Messages target kids and parents. Ads created for the Partnership are subject to a rigorous approval process, including review by a panel of behavioral experts, final approval by a committee comprised of some of the best creative directors in the advertising industry and testing for effectiveness with target audiences.

Creating effective anti-drug messages requires talent, passion and dedication. It also requires an understanding of the issue that's firmly grounded in research. The Partnership has the largest body of consumer-based attitudinal research on drugs in the nation. This research provides insights into the minds of young people and helps to ensure our messages will reach and resonate with their intended audiences. Sophisticated consumer research – along with the critically important counsel of our partners in health care, education, government, entertainment and community volunteer organizations across the country – ensure that Partnership ads continue to meet the highest standards of excellence.

(For more information about the Partnership and its programs, download PDFA's latest annual report @ www.drugfreeamerica.org/newscenter. To request a hard copy of the report by mail, call the Partnership's Public Affairs Group @ 212-922-1560.)

The Partnership Attitude Tracking Study

The Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS) is PDFa's unique contribution to the field of substance abuse prevention. An annual study that tracks the elaborate and complex attitudes consumers have about illegal drugs, this research allows us to understand what our target audiences think and feel about various drugs. This consumer-focused, consumer-based research is the largest drug-related attitudinal tracking study in the country. No other organization in the country – commercial, non-profit or governmental – has the rich insights into consumers and drugs that PATS has captured in its 13 installments. The insights gleaned from this study help us develop advertising designed to *unsell* drugs to consumers.

Attitudes drive behavior. According to the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future study, two critical drug-related attitudes – perception of risk (how risky consumers view a particular drug) and perception of social disapproval (consumer appeal and acceptance of a particular drug) – move in correlation with consumption. Generally speaking, as consumers come to view drug use as more risky and increasingly disapprove of drugs, consumption declines. Similarly, the opposite holds true.

Understanding the vast dimensions of perceptions of risk and social disapproval provides a look into the consumer mindset on drugs, and offers some insight into the challenges of effectively *unselling* drugs via media communication. It is no easy task. When it comes to drugs and drug taking, consumers define risk in a multitude of ways – physical, emotional, social, aspirational, etc. Each risk category is segmented by specific types of attitudes. The same holds true for social disapproval. Both major categories, and the elaborate array of subcategories and attitudinal measures, are influenced by a multitude of variables – age, gender, race, socio-economic background, geography, peers and other influencers.

Different consumers look at different drugs in different ways. As children pass through childhood into adolescence, for example, their attitudes about drugs – marijuana, cocaine, inhalants, heroin, etc. – change constantly. For example, middle school teens are far more likely than teens in high school to say that marijuana is one of the most harmful drugs; conversely, high school teens are much more likely to report that heroin is among the most harmful drugs. In addition, teens view trial use of drugs very differently than they view regular use. In developing media messages to speak effectively and persuasively to our target audiences about drugs, we must understand their mindset, their attitudes about drugs. The more we do – and the more our messages acknowledge this reality – the more effective the messages will be.

PATS consists of three nationally projectable samples – a middle school sample for students in grades six through eight, a teen sample for students in grades seven through 12, and a parent sample. The 2000 PATS is the 13th wave of this research conducted since 1986. Prior to 1993, these studies were conducted by interviews in public locations. Since the 1993 study, PATS has been conducted in schools and in homes.

Beginning with the 1995 study, the in-home study was conducted with parents of children under the age of 19, and data from that sample are projected accordingly.

Since 1993 Audits & Surveys Worldwide, Inc., a leading market research company, has conducted the studies for PDFA. PATS is funded, in part, by an organizational grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In the 2000 PATS teens study, 7,290 teens in grades seven through 12 were surveyed. The margin of error for the sample is ± 1.5 percent.

The data in this report were collected in May and June of 2000. Students in public, parochial and private schools took part, with an oversampling of schools in African- and Hispanic-American populations. At each school taking part in the study, three classes were randomly selected. Questionnaires were self-administered under the supervision of Audits & Surveys' interviewers. Interviews were conducted in seven waves. Parental consent forms were distributed in all classes selected, and the anonymity of each student surveyed was maintained throughout the study.

Significant differences on charts and graphs in this report are indicated only for 2000 results versus 1998 and 1999, unless otherwise noted. Significant differences are noted with an * next to figures from the years the 2000 data significantly differ from.

Questionnaire Development

Audits & Surveys Worldwide developed the questionnaires for the Partnership Attitude Tracking Study in cooperation with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America.[®] Survey instruments were based on past PATS questionnaires, with modifications designed to cover new areas of interest, to improve the sensitivity of the existing questions and to produce data that could be directly compared with other existing research.

Self-Report Data

PATS is based on self-reported data. Surveys based on self-reported data collection represent the dominant methodology used in the marketplace. Many academic/government institutions use self-reporting data when researching sensitive issues, i.e., Centers for Disease Control (Youth-At-Risk), University of Michigan (Monitoring the Future study), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (National Household Survey on Drug Use).

Self-reported data have strengths and limitations. Researchers can take preparatory steps to ensure collection of self-reported data is done properly and produces the most accurate answers possible. For example, questionnaires are not signed, nor are they identified in any way that might make it possible to associate responses with the individuals who gave them.

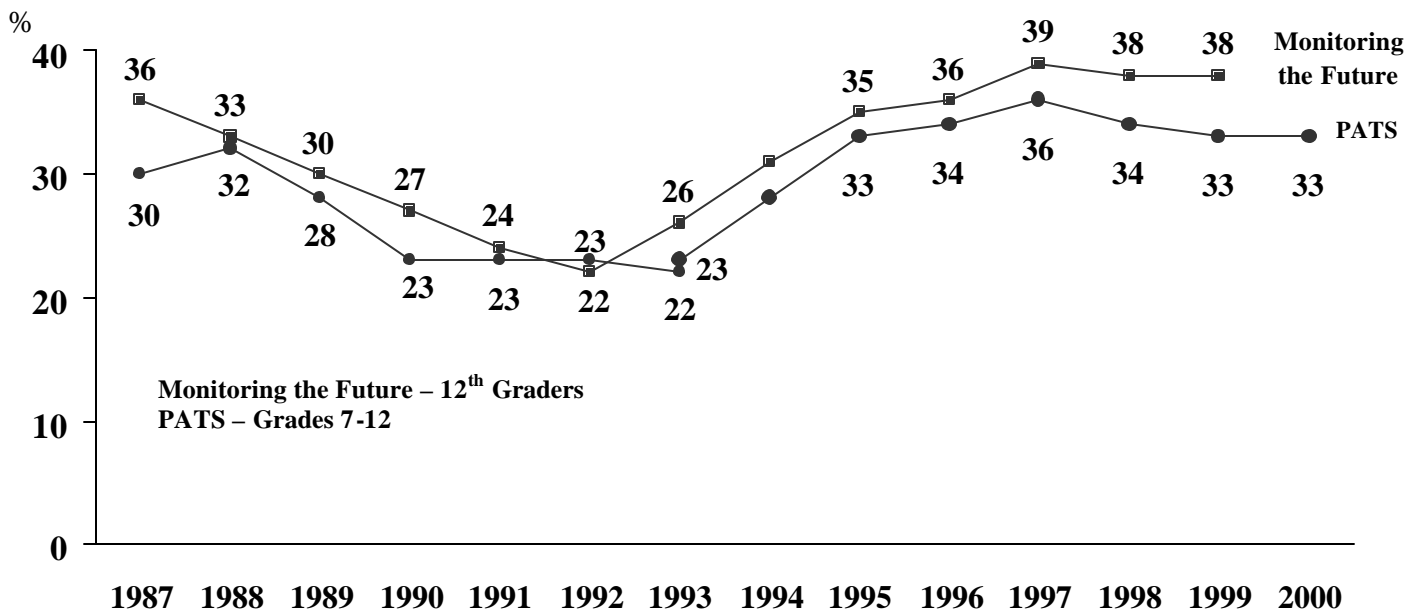
PATS and Other Leading Studies

Due to differences in data collection and the manner in which questions are asked, different surveys often generate different absolute numbers.

While specific data points may vary somewhat, what is most important in gauging the validity of data sets is the direction of trends as charted by multiple surveys. PATS, the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future study, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Household Survey on Drug Use all reveal similar movements in drug trends. For example, notice on the chart below the general agreement of trend lines from PATS and Monitoring the Future on the question of how many teens have used marijuana within the past year:²

Marijuana Usage

Used in past year



² Chart prepared by Audits and Surveys Worldwide

Partnership Attitude Tracking Study

Spring 2000
Teens in Grades 7 through 12

KEY FINDINGS

Summary of Key Findings

Adolescent drug use in America peaked in 1979, declined steadily throughout the 1980s and began to climb once again in 1991-1992. Drug use among teenagers continued to increase until 1997, and since has begun a slow, steady decline. Usage rates stabilized between 1999 and 2000.

Top-Line Findings

Continuing a trend that began three years ago, fewer teenagers in America are smoking marijuana – the most widely used illicit drug – but at the same time, a small, increasing number of adolescents is embracing harder drugs like Ecstasy, methamphetamine and inhalants.

Overall drug use among teens was stable between 1999 and 2000, and down significantly since 1997, with trial use down nine percent (from 53 percent in 1997 to 48 percent in 2000), past-year use down nine percent (from 43 to 39 percent) and past-month use down 11 percent (from 28 to 25 percent).

Changes in marijuana use and attitudes and perceptions about marijuana are trending in a positive direction. Overall trends in drug-related attitudes are stable, and attitudes about methamphetamine and inhalants are vastly improved since 1997.

Positive changes in use and attitudes were less pronounced between 1999 and 2000, and the attitudes against several specific drugs, including inhalants, methamphetamine and crack/cocaine, appear to be leveling off. Anti-heroin attitudes have weakened. These changes may explain why even as fewer teenagers in America are smoking marijuana – the most widely used illicit drug – a small, increasing number of teens is embracing harder drugs. Since 1997:

- Trial use of marijuana by teens has declined significantly, down approximately 10 percent (in 2000, 40 percent reported trying marijuana at least once in their lifetime, down significantly from 44 percent in 1997).
- Past year use of marijuana by teens has declined significantly, down eight percent (from 36 percent to 33 percent).
- Past month use has declined significantly, down 13 percent (from 24 percent to 21 percent).

Teen attitudes about marijuana are continuing a positive trend. Fewer teens see marijuana as prevalent, and more are rejecting the drug. This year, more teens believe marijuana will make them lazy (48 percent, up from 46 percent in 1997), boring (32 percent, up from 29) or act stupidly or foolishly (54 percent, up from 51). Fewer see marijuana all around them (47 percent, down from 59 percent in 1997), and fewer believe most people will use the drug (36 percent, down from 41).

Changes in marijuana use and attitudes are associated with the launch of a multi-million dollar anti-drug media campaign, much of which has targeted teens with messages about marijuana.

An increasing number of teens are turning to other drugs, albeit at much lower levels:

- Trial use of Ecstasy has doubled since 1995 (from five percent to 10 percent), and use of the drug is now on par with teens' trial experience with cocaine, crack and LSD. More teens in the U.S. now report trial use of Ecstasy than trial of heroin.
- The percentage of teens that have used inhalants in the past year climbed significantly from 11 percent in 1999 to 13 percent in 2000. Seven percent said they have used inhalants in the past month, up significantly from six percent in 1999.
- Eight percent of teens said they have used methamphetamine in the past year and five percent said they have used the drug in the past month, up from seven and three percent, respectively, in 1999 (the past month usage measure represents a statistically significant increase).

Attitudes drive behavior. When attitudes change, behavioral changes usually follow. As its name suggests, the Partnership Attitude Tracking Study measures teen attitudes about drugs and drug use as well as levels of drug consumption. Measuring drug use provides a snapshot of drug consumption; measuring the strength of anti-drug attitudes serves as an indicator of where consumption trends are likely to move in years ahead.

One reason marijuana attitudes and usage rates are continuing a slow, steady decline from 1997 levels may be the impact of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign. This unprecedented public-private sector initiative, coordinated by the Office of National Drug Control Policy under the leadership of Barry McCaffrey in cooperation with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America,[®] launched nationally in July 1998. The core of this federally funded effort uses paid advertising exposure to deliver its messages.

The advertising portion of the campaign targets adolescents and parents, with different messages focusing on risks, resistance skills, normative education and the benefits of avoiding drug use. Approximately 60 percent of the campaign's ad budget focuses on young people; 40 percent targets parents. Since marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug among children and teenagers in the United States³, a large percentage of advertising in the campaign has been designed to educate adolescents about the risks of this particular drug. As PATS research has shown and shows again this year, this is the drug where the greatest progress has been made with teens in recent years.

³ 2000 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study

Since the campaign launched nationally in July 1998:

- The number of teens reporting seeing or hearing anti-drug commercials every day or more has increased 53 percent (49 percent in 2000, up from 32 percent in 1998).
- The number of teens reporting that anti-drug ads have made them more aware of the risks of using drugs (agree a lot) has increased 26 percent (39 percent in 2000, up from 31 percent in 1998).
- The number of teens who say the ads provided new information about or told them things they didn't know about drugs increased 19 percent (37 percent in 2000, up from 31 percent in 1998).

While a definitive cause-and-effect relationship between the ads and shifts in teen drug attitudes cannot be established, it is interesting to note that progress has come in the area where the campaign has focused much of its resources, while those drugs not addressed specifically in the campaign with significant media weight have ticked upward.

Overall Teen Drug Use

There are approximately 23.6 million teens in grades seven through 12 in America today. Since 1997, overall drug use among teens in these grades is down significantly:

- Trial use of drugs is down nine percent (from 53 percent in 1997 to 48 percent in 2000) (Illustration A).
- Past-year use of drugs is down nine percent (from 43 to 39 percent) (Illustration A).
- Past-month use is down 11 percent (from 28 to 25 percent) (Illustration A).

In human terms, this means 11.3 million American teens have tried an illegal drug at some point in their life; 9.2 million have used an illegal drug in the past year; and 5.9 million – one out of every four teens in America – have used an illegal drug in the past 30 days.

General Anti-Drug Attitudes

Attitudes drive behavior. According to the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future study, two critical drug-related attitudes – perception of risk (how risky consumers view a particular drug) and perception of social disapproval (consumer appeal and acceptance of a particular drug) – move in correlation with consumption. Generally speaking, as teens come to view drug use as more risky and increasingly disapprove of drugs, consumption declines. Similarly, the opposite holds true.

Throughout much of the 1990s, a time when the nation paid less attention to the drug issue⁴, gains that had been made in changing teen drug attitudes and behaviors began to erode. After anti-drug attitudes began weakening, teen drug use began climbing. In general, these trends have now stabilized: According to the 2000 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study, general anti-drug attitudes among teens have remained stable since 1997 (see Illustration B). Attitudes related to the risk of marijuana use have improved dramatically. Attitudes related to harder drugs remain high, with noteworthy exceptions (as detailed later in this report).

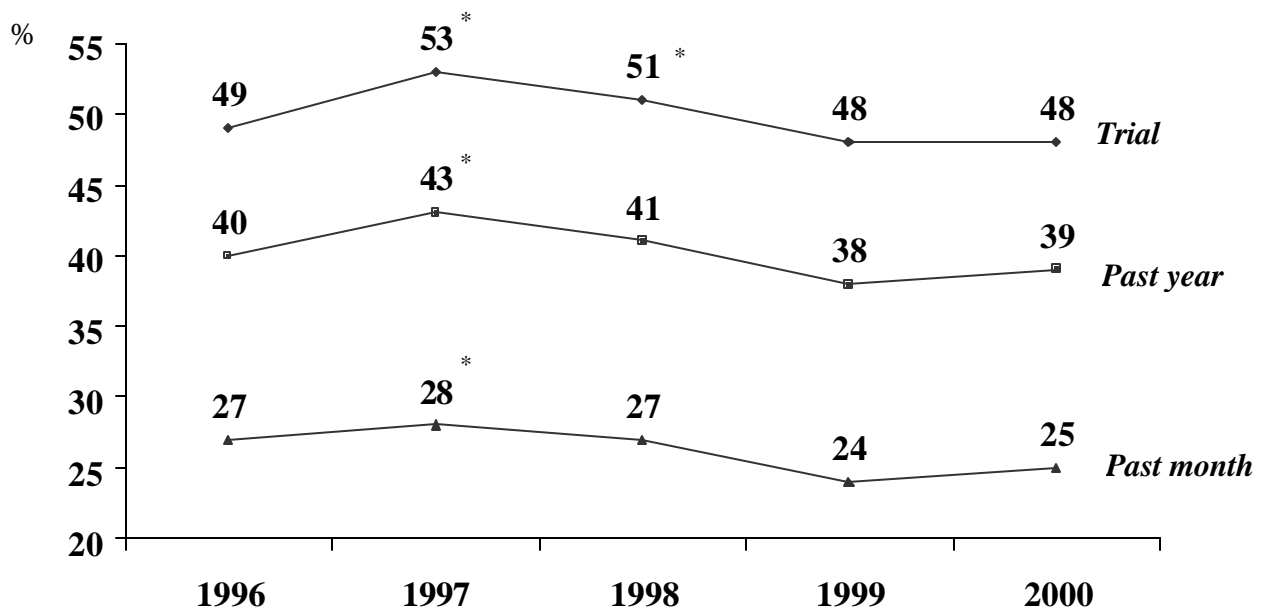
Exposure to Drugs

Since 1997, the number of teens who say someone has tried to sell or give them drugs has declined significantly (53 percent in 2000, down from 59 percent in 1997). The number of teens who say they've been offered drugs at school is also down significantly since 1997 (30 percent in 2000, down from 33 percent in 1997) (Illustration C).

⁴ July/Aug. 1997 *Media Monitor*, Center for Media and Public Affairs

Illustration A

Trends in Illegal Drug Use, Grades 7 - 12 1996-2000[†]



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

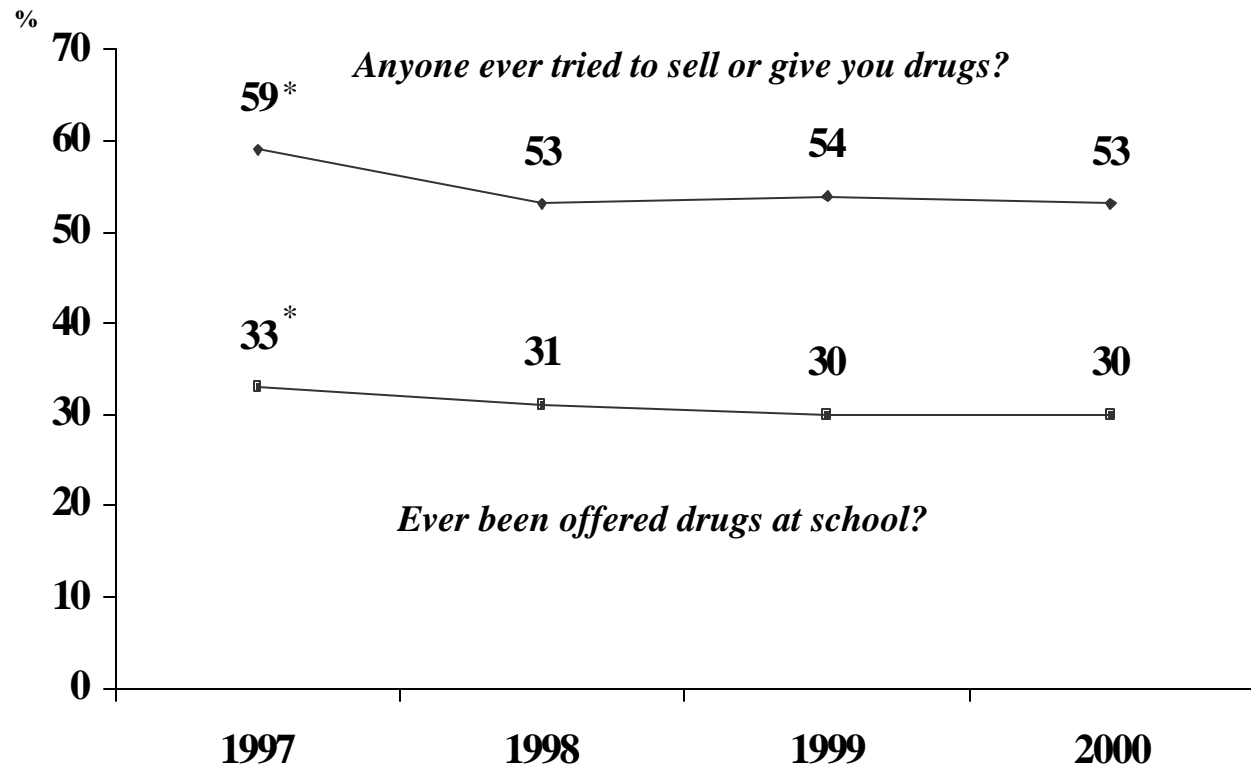
[†] = trial use nets marijuana, crack/cocaine, LSD, Ecstasy, heroin, inhalants and methamphetamine.
Past year use nets marijuana, crack/cocaine, inhalants and methamphetamine. Past month use nets marijuana, crack/cocaine, inhalants and methamphetamine.

Illustration B

General Anti-Drug Attitudes

% Agree Strongly	1997	1998	1999	2000
I would try to talk a friend out of using drugs	52	54	53	53
I don't want to hang around drug users	35	35	35	34
Taking drugs scares me	34	32	34	34
In my school, fewer kids use drugs than three years ago	9	9	8	9

Illustration C



Trial of Drugs

Trial use of a drug (sometimes asked as “lifetime use”) is defined as having tried a given drug on at least one occasion. Note that there are high levels of experience with alcohol and tobacco among teenagers, no doubt related to the legality, availability and social acceptance of these substances:

- 80 percent of teens report they have used alcohol⁵
- 65 percent have used tobacco⁶
- 40 percent have used marijuana
- 21 percent have used inhalants
- 12 percent have used LSD
- 11 percent have used methamphetamine
- 10 percent have used cocaine/crack
- 10 percent have used Ecstasy
- 4 percent have used heroin

Most Harmful Drugs

Perceptions of harm play a critical role in teens’ decisions about whether to try illegal drugs. PATS asks teens to rank drugs by perceived levels of risk:

- 28 percent of teens say heroin is the most harmful drug
- 14 percent say methamphetamine
- 10 percent say crack
- 8 percent say LSD
- 7 percent each say cocaine, marijuana, inhalants and Ecstasy

⁵ Alcohol data from 1999 Monitoring the Future measure of 12th graders

⁶ Tobacco data from 1999 Monitoring the Future measure of 12th graders

Teens and Marijuana

Marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug in this country: 75 percent of current users of illegal drugs (age 12 and over) in America use marijuana.⁷

As noted above, of the 23.6 million teens in grades seven through 12 in America, 9.4 million (40 percent) have tried marijuana. While viewed by teens as one of the least harmful drugs, more than half of all teens in substance abuse treatment centers nationwide cite marijuana as their primary drug of abuse.⁸

Use

Also called “weed,” “pot” and, to a lesser extent, “blunts” and “chronic,” marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug among teens: Approximately one-third of all teens (33 percent) have used marijuana in the past year alone.

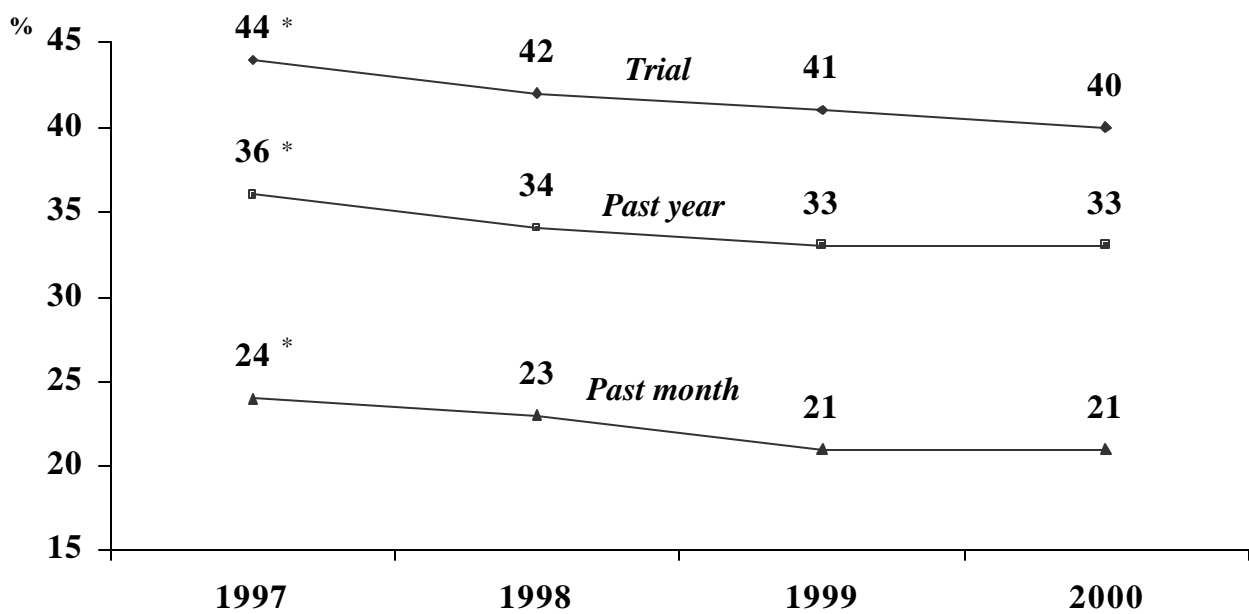
Since 1997, marijuana has lost some of its appeal for teens. Following 1997 and continuing through 2000, there has been a slow, steady decline in the percentage of teens reporting use of marijuana:

- Since 1997, the number of teens that say they have tried marijuana at least once in their lives has declined by approximately 10 percent. In 2000, 40 percent of teens said they had tried marijuana at least once, down significantly from 44 percent in 1997 (Illustration D).
- Since 1997, past year use of marijuana by teens has declined by eight percent. In 2000, 33 percent of teens said they had used marijuana in the past year, down significantly from 36 percent in 1997 (Illustration D).
- Since 1997, past month use of marijuana by teens has declined by 13 percent. In 2000, one in five teens (21 percent) said they had used marijuana in the past month, down significantly from 24 percent in 1997 (Illustration D).

⁷ 1999 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Household Survey

⁸ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Teen Marijuana Use



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

Attitudes and Perceptions

In 2000, significantly more teens are likely to see specific risks in marijuana use compared to 1998 (Illustration E). For example:

- 66 percent of teens believe marijuana use carries great risk of causing dangerous driving, up significantly from 61 percent in 1998.
- 57 percent believe marijuana use carries great risk of keeping them from getting into a good college, up significantly from 51 percent in 1998.
- 54 percent believe marijuana use carries great risk of making them act stupidly or foolishly, up significantly from 51 percent in 1998.

It's also worth noting that, as in years past, one of the top risks teens associated with marijuana use has been upsetting their parents. Two-thirds of all teens (67 percent) in 2000 mentioned this risk – up significantly from 1998 (64 percent).

Perceptions of risk are not the only things that drive drug use. The perceived prevalence of a drug also has an impact, as does the perceived level of difficulty in rejecting offers of that drug. In 2000, several measures in these areas show improvement:

- The number of teens who agree strongly that: “most people will try marijuana sometimes” is down significantly compared to 1997 (36 percent in 2000, down from 41 percent in 1997).
- The number of teens who agree strongly that: “it seems like marijuana is everywhere these days” is down significantly compared to 1997 (47 percent in 2000, down from 59 percent in 1997)
- The number of teens who agree strongly that: “it's hard to say no when friends want you to try marijuana” is down significantly compared to 1997 (11 percent in 2000, down from 14 percent in 1997).

Teens consistently overestimate the number of their peers who are using marijuana, and this misperception may wrongly persuade teens that marijuana use is the norm. This misperception is still widespread, but significantly less so than it was in 1997. In 2000, 66 percent of teens said they “have close friends who use marijuana occasionally,” down significantly from 71 percent in 1997. Further, the percentage of teens that said they “have close friends who get stoned or high on marijuana regularly” is also down significantly (57 percent in 2000, down from 62 percent in 1997) (Illustration F).

Illustration E

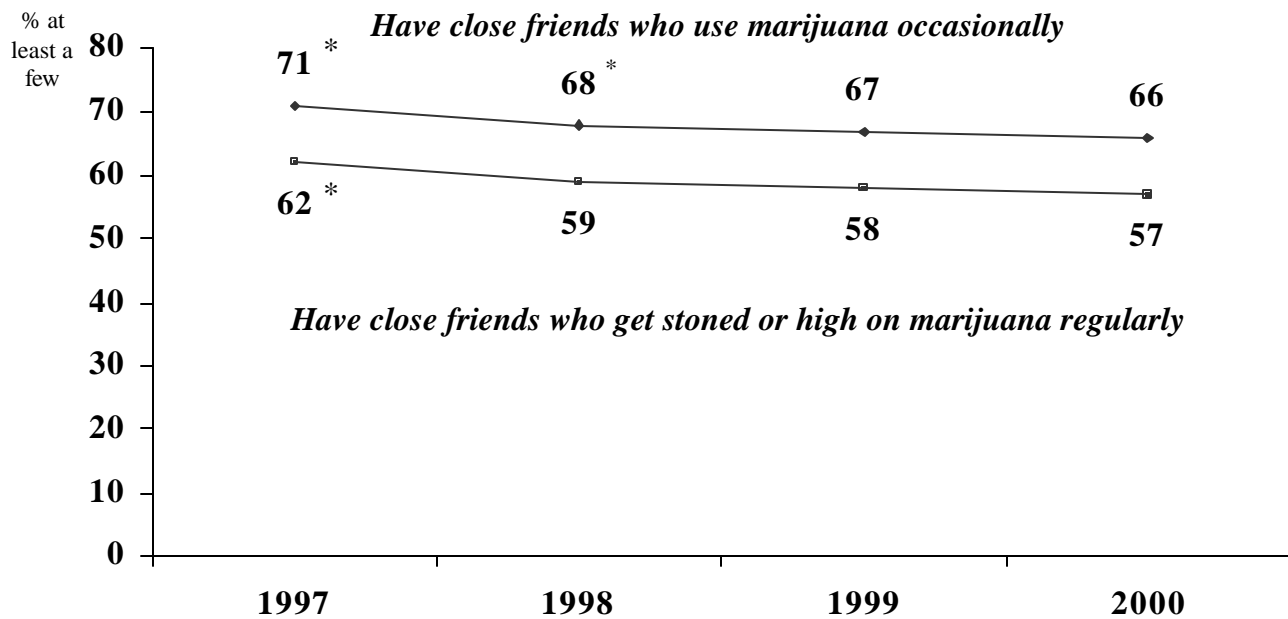
Specific Risks of Marijuana Use

% great risk in using marijuana of:	1998	1999	2000
Getting in trouble with the law	64*	68	67
Drive dangerously	61*	66	66
Not getting into a good college	51*	55	57
Missing out on the good things in life	53*	56	56
Acting stupidly and foolishly	51*	53	54
Losing their friends	47*	50	50
Getting depressed	44*	48	49
Becoming lazy	44*	48	48
Being lonely	38*	41	43
Becoming boring	28*	31	32

* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How much risk is there that each of the following would happen to someone who uses marijuana?

Friends' Marijuana Use



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How many of your close friends, if any, do each of the following...?

Teens and Ecstasy

Ecstasy, or MDMA, (3-4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine), is a synthetic drug with amphetamine-like and hallucinogenic properties. It usually comes in a tablet form and is often branded with familiar logos (e.g., Playboy bunnies, the Nike “swoosh”, etc.) so buyers can differentiate between “brands” of the drug. Since Ecstasy is largely manufactured in clandestine labs, the quality and the purity of various versions of the drug can vary widely; the branding allows users to request specific pills in hopes of replicating previous highs.

Ecstasy – also known as “Adam,” “Bean,” “E,” “X” and “XTC” – is a popular “club drug” and often can be found at “raves.” While many users believe it to be harmless, it can cause psychological difficulties including confusion and/or depression, sleep problems, drug craving, severe anxiety, and paranoia – during and sometimes weeks after taking Ecstasy. Short-term physical effects can include muscle tension, involuntary teeth clenching, nausea, blurred vision, rapid eye movement, faintness, and chills or sweating. Research has linked Ecstasy to long-term damage to parts of the brain critical to thought and memory. Chronic use of the drug has been found to cause long-lasting damage to the neurons that release serotonin, and memory impairment.⁹

Use

Trial use of Ecstasy is up significantly. In 2000, 10 percent of teens said they have tried the drug compared to seven percent in 1998 and 1999. In 1995, only five percent of teens reported they had tried Ecstasy (Illustration G).

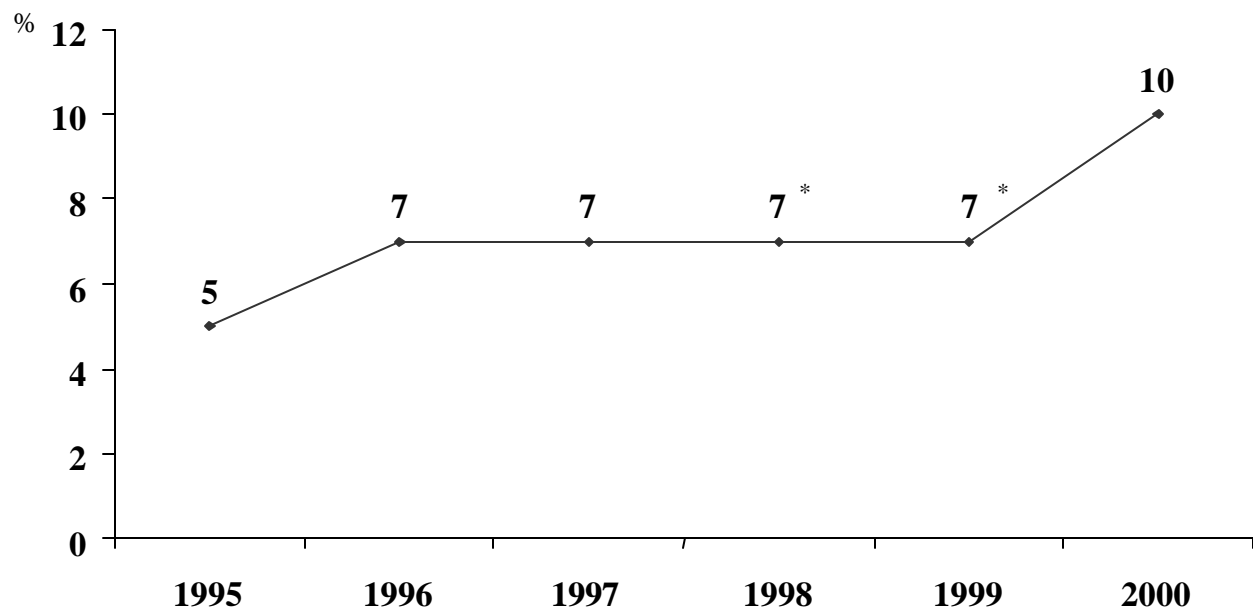
Attitudes and Perceptions

The number of teens who say they “have close friends who use Ecstasy” was also up significantly in 2000. Nearly one-third (32 percent) of teens in 2000 reported they had close friends that used Ecstasy, up from 24 percent in 1998 and 26 percent in 1999 (Illustration H). Remembering that teens tend to overestimate the number of their peers who use drugs, this figure is not surprising. However, the perception may wrongly persuade teens that Ecstasy use is the norm.

In 2000, 15 percent of teens ranked Ecstasy as either the most or second-most harmful illegal drug, up significantly from 12 percent in both 1998 and 1999, and from just 10 percent in 1996. More research is needed to understand the reasons why Ecstasy use is climbing even as more teens view Ecstasy as one of the most harmful drugs. One possible explanation could be that teens are associating less risk with experimenting with this drug than with regular use.

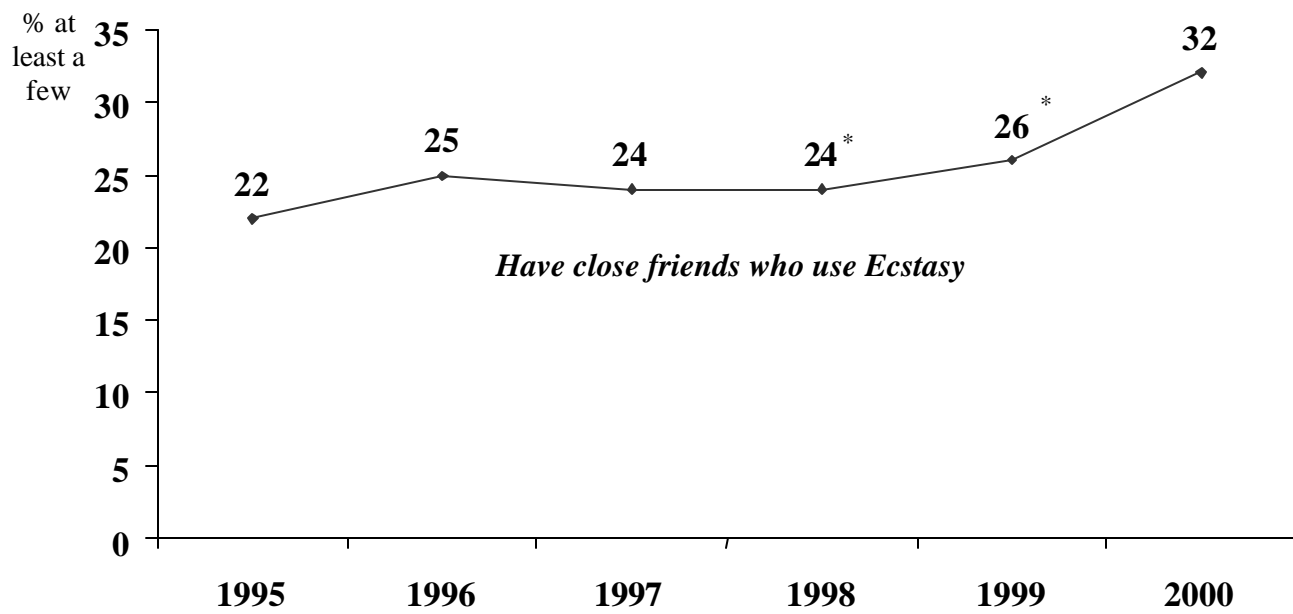
⁹ National Institute on Drug Abuse; Drug Enforcement Administration

Teen Ecstasy Trial Use



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

Friends' Ecstasy Use



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How many of your close friends, if any, do each of the following ...?

Teens and Inhalants

Inhalant abuse may be the most unrecognized – and unusual – form of substance abuse. Inhalants are chemicals, found in ordinary household products, which are inhaled or sniffed by children to get high. While parental knowledge about inhalants is often limited to the idea of “sniffing glue,” there are hundreds of household products teens can – and do – abuse to get high.

Traditionally, the practice of inhaling fumes is most pronounced around 8th grade. Examples of products teens abuse to get high include model airplane glue, nail polish remover, cleaning fluids, hair spray, gasoline, the propellant in aerosol whipped cream and propane. These products are sniffed, snorted, “bagged” (practice of inhaling fumes from a plastic bag), or “huffed” (practice of inserting an inhalant-soaked rag, sock, or roll of toilet paper in the mouth).

Sniffing chemicals can induce heart failure and death. This is especially common from the abuse of fluorocarbons and butane-type gases. High concentrations of inhalants also can cause death from suffocation by displacing oxygen in the lungs and then in the central nervous system so that breathing ceases.¹⁰

Use

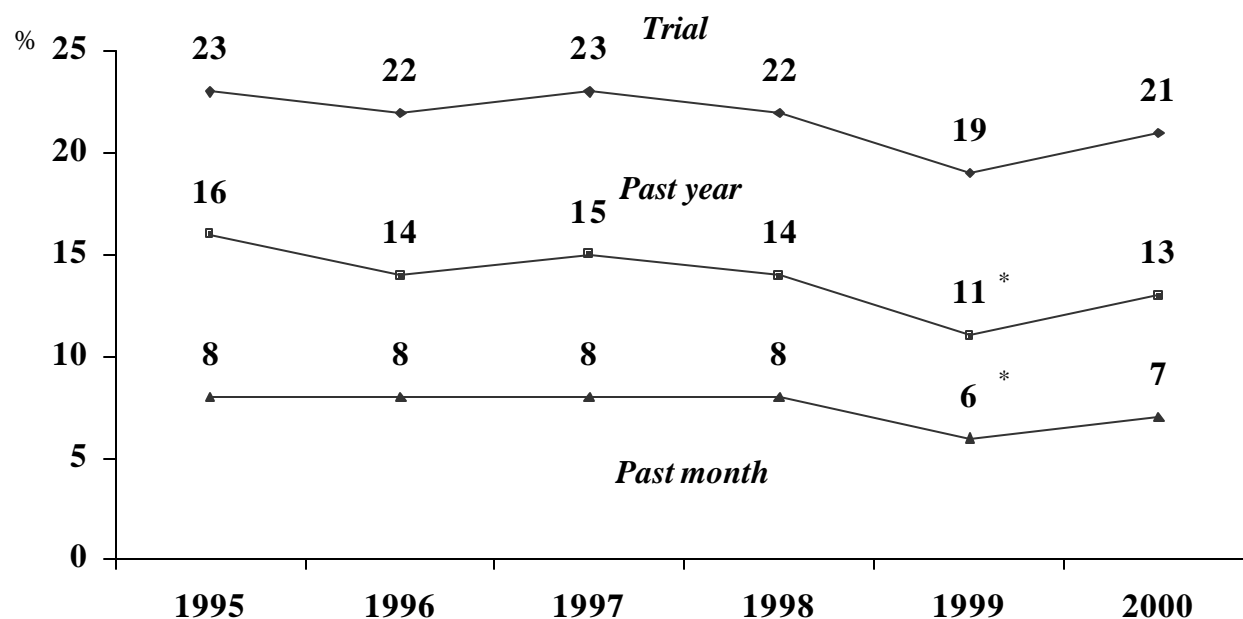
Down significantly from 1995 to 1999, teen use of inhalants appears to have rebounded in 2000. The percentage of teens reporting trial inhalant use remained stable in 2000 (21 percent compared to 19 percent in 1999), but the percentages of teens reporting past year and past month use of inhalants were up significantly, with 13 percent reporting past year use and seven percent reporting past month use, up from 11 percent and six percent, respectively, in 1999 (Illustration I).

Attitudes and Perceptions

Compared to 1998, the percentage of teens that agree strongly, “sniffing or huffing things to get high can kill you” is up significantly (from 68 percent to 78 percent). The figure is unchanged since 1999; similarly, the vast majority of teens (84 percent) agree strongly that “sniffing or huffing things to get high can cause brain damage,” stable compared to 1999 (85 percent) (Illustration J). Note: more research may be needed to answer the question of why use of inhalants appears to have climbed when attitudes against them have not weakened.

¹⁰ National Institute on Drug Abuse

Teen Inhalant Abuse



* = Significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

Attitudes About Inhalants

% agree strongly	1997	1998	1999	2000
Sniffing or huffing things to get high can kill you	69	68*	78	78
Sniffing or huffing things to get high can cause brain damage	NA	NA	85	84

* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?

Teens and Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine is an addictive stimulant that strongly activates certain systems in the brain. Known on the street by names such as “chalk,” “crank,” “crystal,” “speed” and “ice,” meth is a crystal-like powdered substance that sometimes comes in large rock-like chunks. Methamphetamine can be taken orally, injected, snorted or smoked.

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, production of and trafficking in meth first gained hold in the West and Southwest regions of the United States. However, an expansion of Mexico-based trafficking operations, combined with an increased number of independent U.S.-based meth labs, helped the drug move into the Pacific Northwest, the Midwest and the Southeast. Now, the drug has continued its eastward march with production and trafficking spreading into the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions.¹¹

Meth users can develop a tolerance quickly, needing higher amounts to get high, and going on longer binges. Long-term use, high dosages, or both can bring on full-blown toxic psychosis (often exhibited as violent, aggressive behavior). This violent, aggressive behavior is usually coupled with extreme paranoia.¹²

Use

After declining steadily from 1996 to 1999, teen use of methamphetamine appears to have rebounded somewhat in 2000. The percentage of teens reporting trial and past year use of meth in 2000 was stable (11 and eight percent, respectively, compared to 12 and nine percent, respectively, in 1997 and 10 and seven percent, respectively, in 1999). Reported past month use of meth (five percent) was up significantly from 1999 (three percent) (Illustration K).

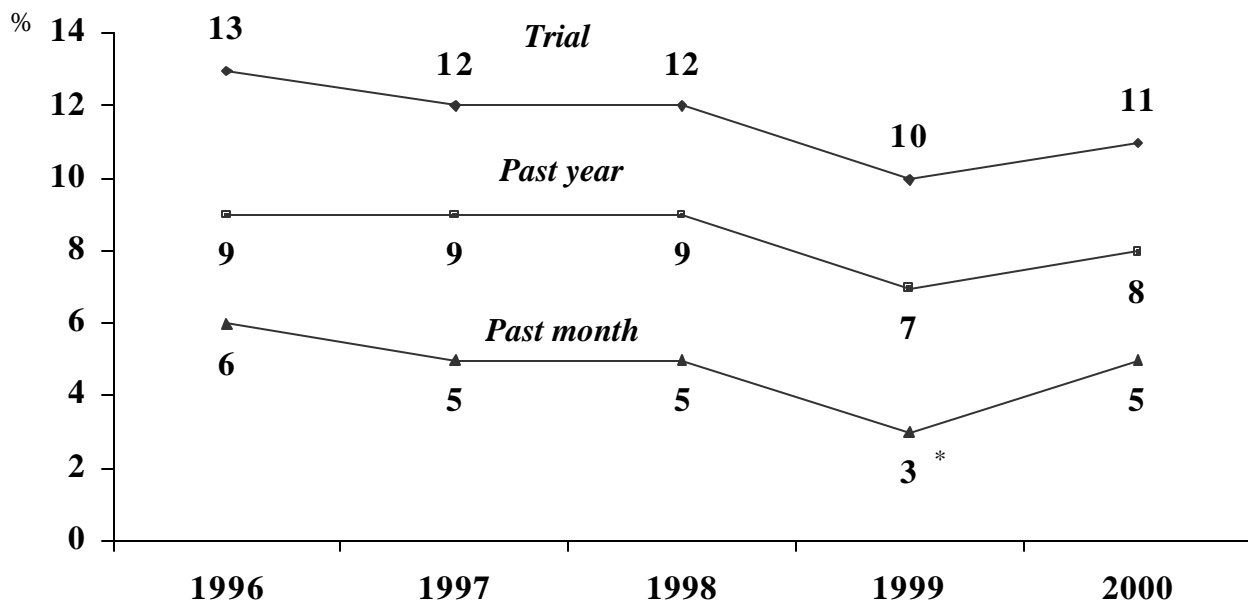
Attitudes and Perceptions

On the whole, teen use of methamphetamine remains very low, perhaps because teen attitudes against meth remain overwhelmingly strong – at least where regular use of the drug is concerned. The percentage of teens that agree there’s “great risk in using methamphetamine regularly” (78 percent) remained unchanged in 2000 for the second consecutive year. While still fewer than half of all teens (47 percent) agree there’s “great risk in trying methamphetamine once or twice,” this figure is up significantly from 44 percent in 1998 (Illustration L).

¹¹ Drug Enforcement Administration

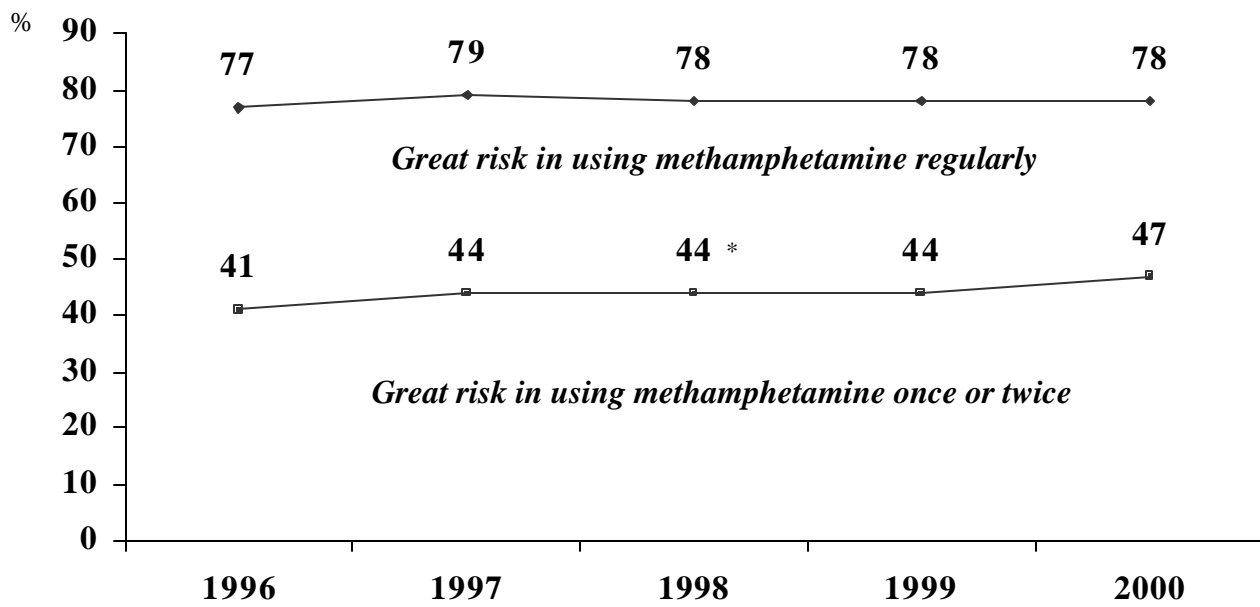
¹² National Institute on Drug Abuse; Drug Enforcement Administration

Teen Methamphetamine Use



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

Overall Risk of Methamphetamine Use



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How much overall risk is there in using methamphetamine?

Teens and Heroin

Heroin is a highly addictive drug derived from morphine, which is obtained from the opium poppy. The drug, usually a white to dark brown powder or tar-like substance, is known on the street by such names as “dope,” “smack,” “junk,” “brown sugar” and “black tar.” Heroin can be injected into a vein (“mainlining”), injected into a muscle, smoked in a water pipe or standard pipe, mixed in a marijuana joint or regular cigarette or inhaled as smoke through a straw (“chasing the dragon”). Because of the increased purity of the drug now available, heroin also can be snorted as powder through the nose.

The ability to snort heroin rather than inject it – a reality that for many would-be users removes the stigma of the needle from heroin use – may be one factor in the renewed popularity of the drug. Another may be a phenomenon called “generational forgetting:” unlike Baby Boomers who grew up in the 1960s, today’s teens have not witnessed what heroin can do to users. These and other reasons may have played a role in the weakening of teen anti-heroin attitudes in 2000, and that weakening has been accompanied by an increase in teens’ perception of the drug’s prevalence.

Use

In 2000, the percentage of teens reporting trial use of heroin (four percent) was stable compared to 1999. This figure has remained stable since 1995 (Illustration M).

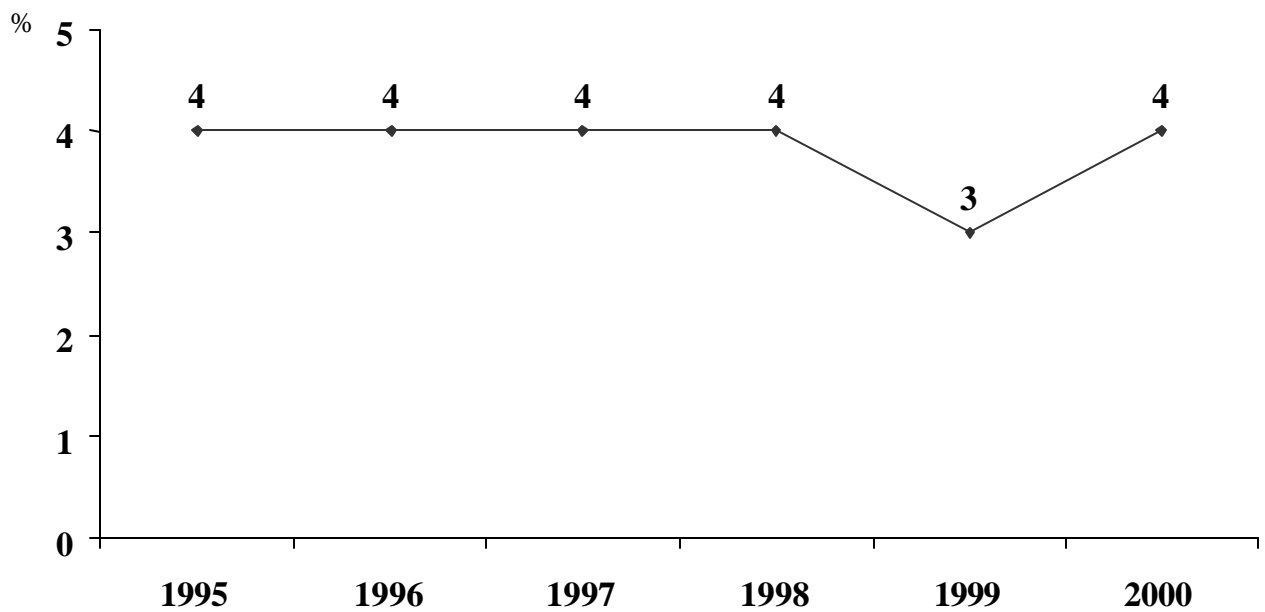
Attitudes and Perceptions

Remembering that increased use of a given drug is often linked to decreased perceptions of risk and increased levels of social approval for that drug, the weakening of several anti-heroin attitudes may be cause for concern:

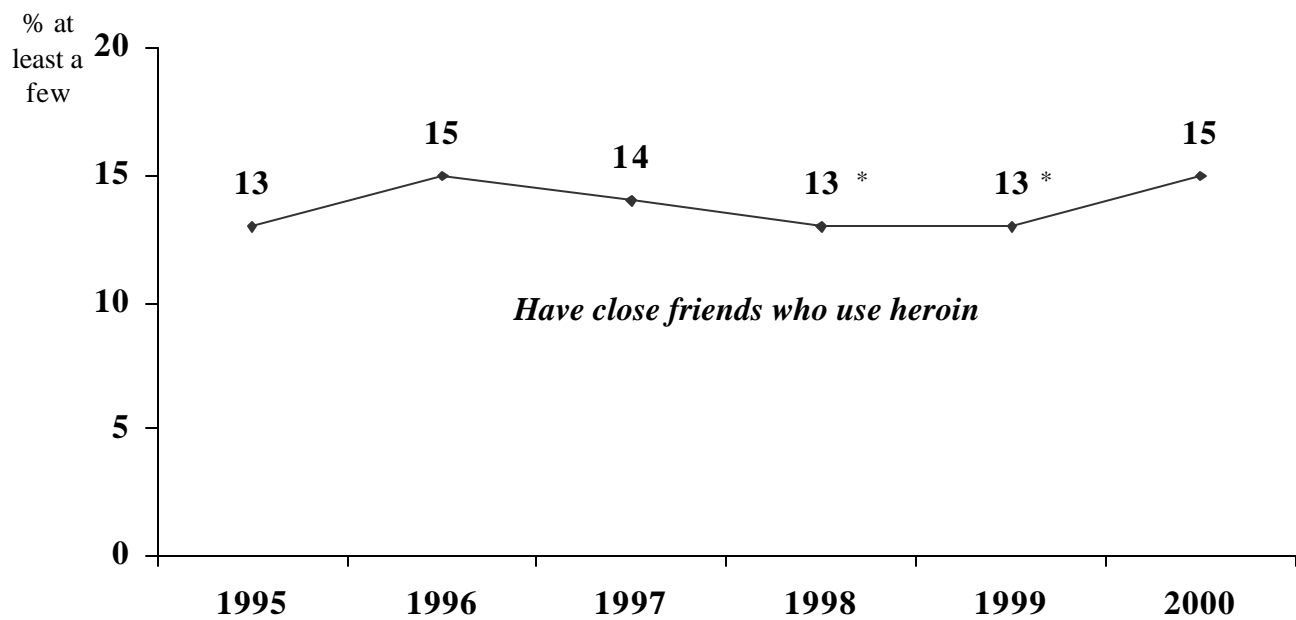
- In 2000, 87 percent of teens agreed strongly that: “heroin can wreck your life,” down significantly from 90 percent in 1999.
- 81 percent of teens agreed strongly that: “heroin is a dangerously addictive drug,” down significantly from 84 percent in 1999 (stable compared to 82 percent in 1998).
- 71 percent of teens agreed strongly that: “heroin is not a glamorous, cool drug,” down significantly from 75 percent in 1999.

In addition, the percentage of teens in 2000 reporting they “have close friends who use heroin” climbed to 15 percent. That’s stable compared to 1997, but up significantly from 13 percent in 1998 and 1999 (Illustration N). Again, teens tend to overestimate the number of their peers who use illegal drugs, so they wrongly perceive that heroin use is the norm. But the fact that the percentage of teens that say they have close friends who use heroin is rising suggests teens’ perception of the prevalence of the drug is increasing.

Teen Heroin Trial Use



Friends' Heroin Use



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How many of your close friends, if any, do each of the following...?

Teens and Cocaine/Crack

Cocaine gained popularity throughout the 1980s and crack followed closely on its heels. The two drugs continued gaining in popularity until the late 1980s. On June 19, 1986, University of Maryland basketball star Len Bias died of a cocaine overdose just days after becoming the second pick overall in the 1986 NBA draft. The tragedy, which attracted widespread media attention, drove home the risks of cocaine use to the nation, and the popularity of cocaine decreased markedly through the early 1990s. Use of cocaine/crack is higher today than it was in the early '90s but does not approach the peak levels seen in the '80s.

Use

Trial, past year and past month use of cocaine/crack by teens was stable in 2000 (10 percent, seven percent and four percent, respectively, compared to 10 percent, eight percent and four percent, respectively, in 1997, and nine, seven and four percent in 1999) (Illustration O).

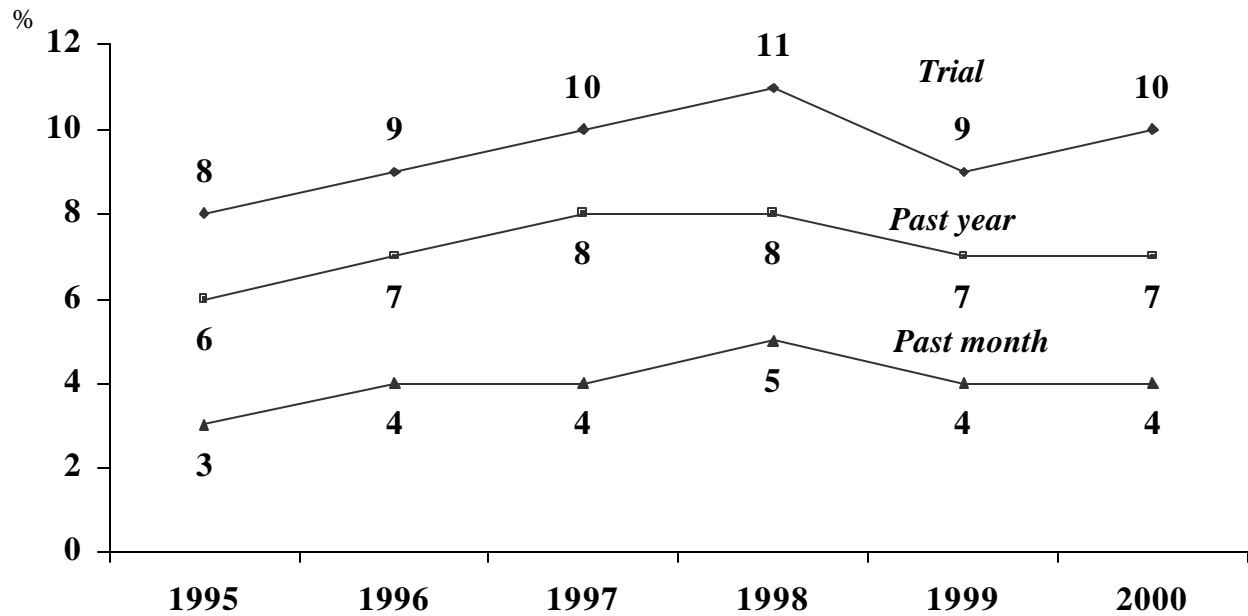
Attitudes and Perceptions

Anti-cocaine attitudes generally remained stable in 2000. The percentage of teens that agreed there's "great risk in using cocaine/crack regularly" (82 percent) was stable compared to 1997 and 1999 (84 percent and 83 percent, respectively). The percentage of teens that agreed there's "great risk in trying cocaine/crack once or twice" (47 percent) was also stable compared to 1997 and 1999 (50 percent and 48 percent, respectively) (Illustration P).

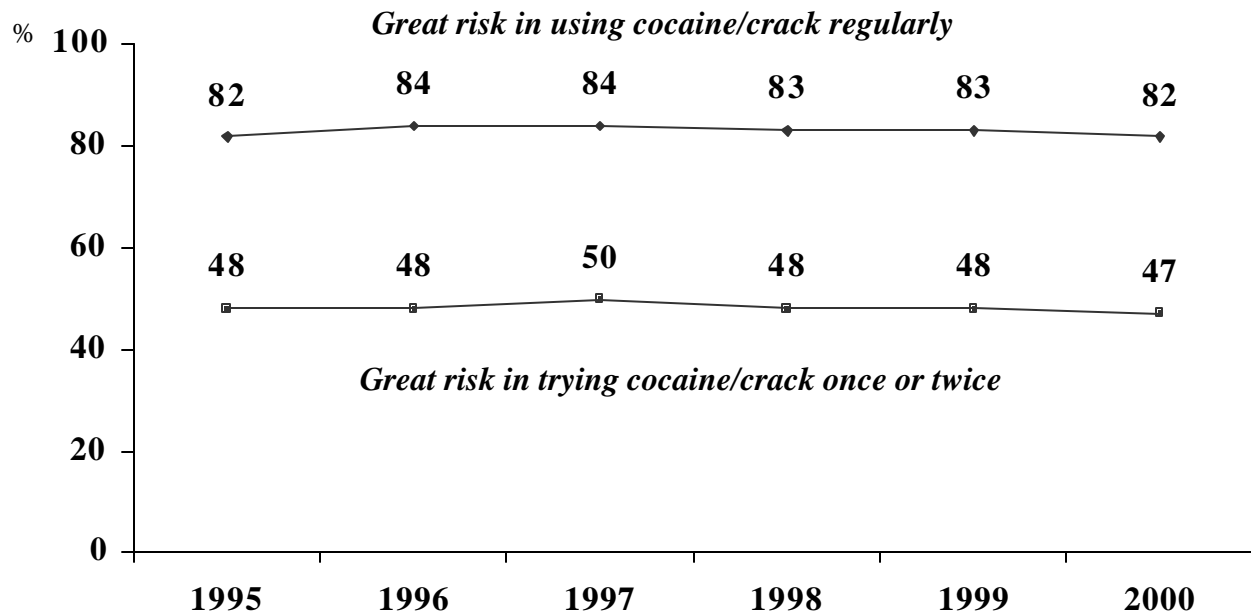
Still, one cautionary note needs to be sounded. While 28 percent of teens in 2000 reported they "have close friends who use cocaine/crack occasionally," stable compared to 1997 (29 percent) and 1999 (26 percent), 19 percent of teens said they "have close friends who use cocaine/crack regularly." That's stable compared to 18 percent in 1997, but up significantly from 16 percent in 1999 (Illustration Q).

Again, while teens tend to overestimate the percentage of their peers who are using illegal drugs, the fact that the percentage of teens that say they have close friends who use cocaine/crack regularly is rising suggests teens' perception of the prevalence of these drugs is increasing.

Teen Cocaine/Crack Use

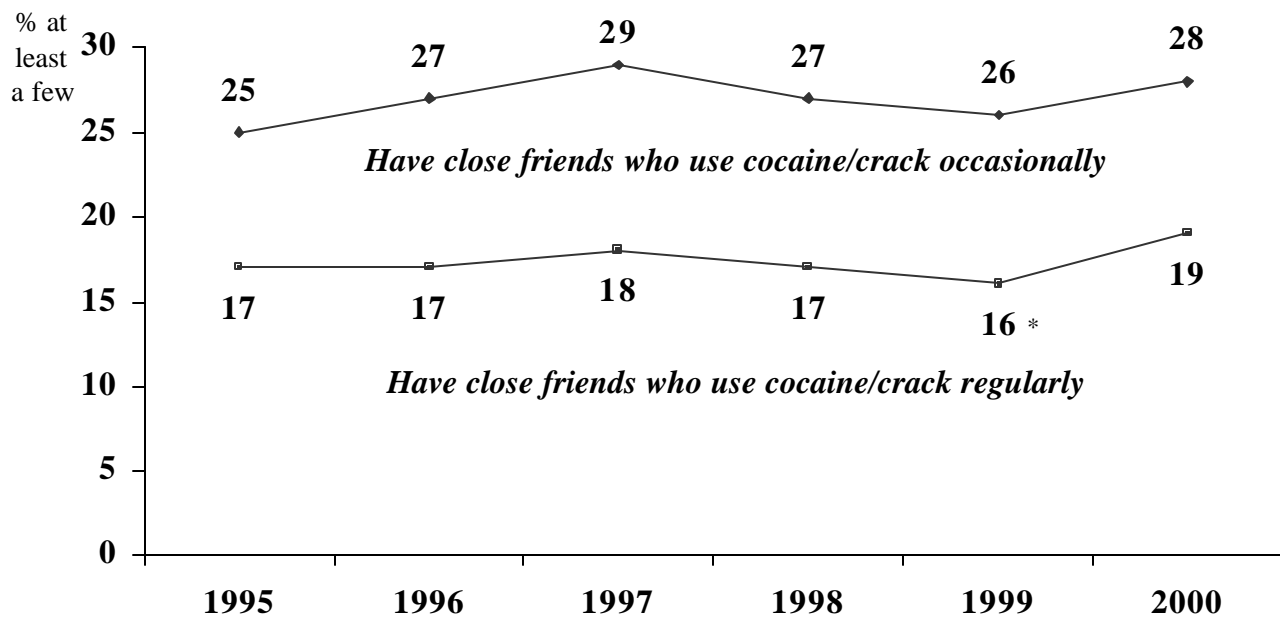


Overall Risk of Cocaine/Crack Use



How much overall risk is there in using cocaine/crack?

Friends' Cocaine/Crack Use



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How many of your close friends, if any, do each of the following...?

Teens and LSD

LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) is the most common hallucinogen and is one of the most potent mood-changing chemicals. It can appear on the street as colored tablets, blotter paper, clear liquid, and thin squares of gelatin, and is known by names such as “acid,” “sugar cubes” and “trips.”

LSD can be taken orally and licked off blotter paper, but gelatin and liquid also can be put in the eyes. Its effects are unpredictable, depending on the amount taken; the user's personality, mood, and expectations; and the surroundings in which the drug is used. The LSD user may feel several different emotions at once or swing rapidly from one emotion to another. After taking LSD some users experience flashbacks, a recurrence of certain aspects of their drug-taking experience without taking the drug again. Flashbacks can occur – without warning – from within a few days to more than a year after LSD use.

Use

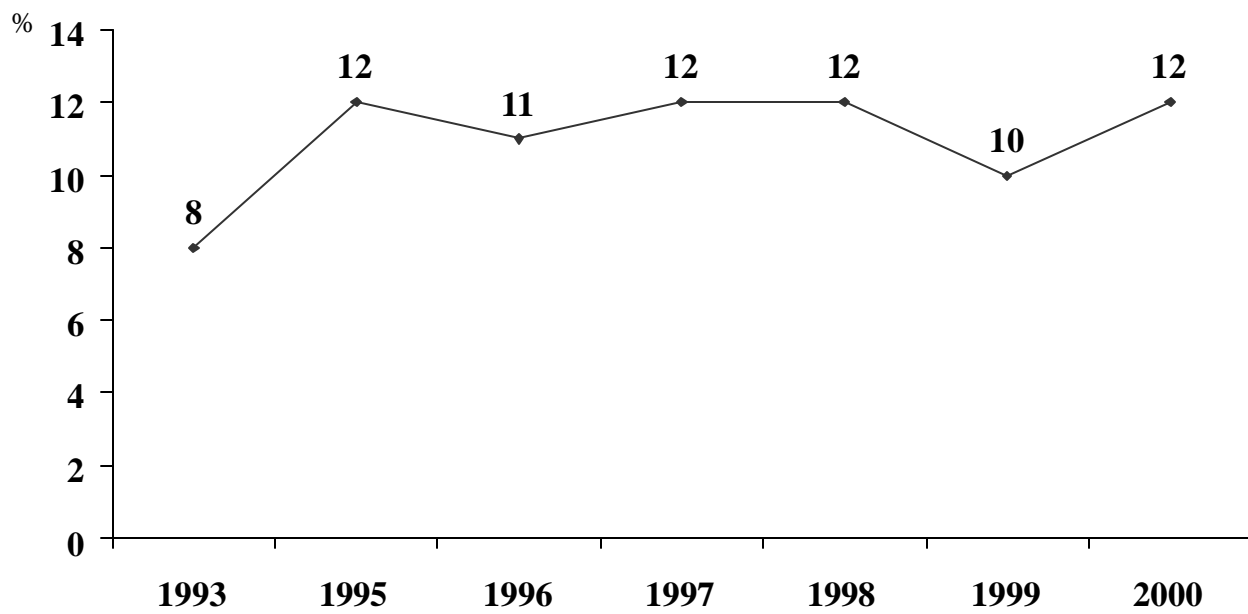
The percentage of teens reporting trial use of LSD (12 percent) was unchanged compared to 1997 and stable compared to 1999 (10 percent). However, these usage rates are all above those seen as recently as 1993 (Illustration R).

Attitudes and Perceptions

In 2000, 19 percent of teens ranked LSD as either the most or second-most harmful illegal drug. That's stable compared to 1997 (20 percent) and unchanged compared to both 1998 and 1999. A similar pattern is seen in the percentage of teens that say LSD is the most harmful illegal drug: eight percent in 2000 ranked LSD as the most harmful drug, stable compared to 1997 (nine percent) and unchanged compared to 1998 and 1999.

The percentage of teens reporting they “have close friends who use LSD” (30 percent) was stable compared to 1997 (34 percent) and unchanged compared to 1998 and 1999.

Teen LSD Trial Use



Teens and Alcohol

While adults may legally purchase alcoholic beverages, it is illegal for teens to buy this drug. As noted above, more teens use alcohol than tobacco, marijuana or any other illegal drug.

Use

The 2000 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study found that 58 percent of teens reported past year use of alcohol. That figure has remained stable over the past few years (63 percent in 1997, 58 percent in 1998, 59 percent in 1999). However, the study did find significant declines in two other measures of teen alcohol use.

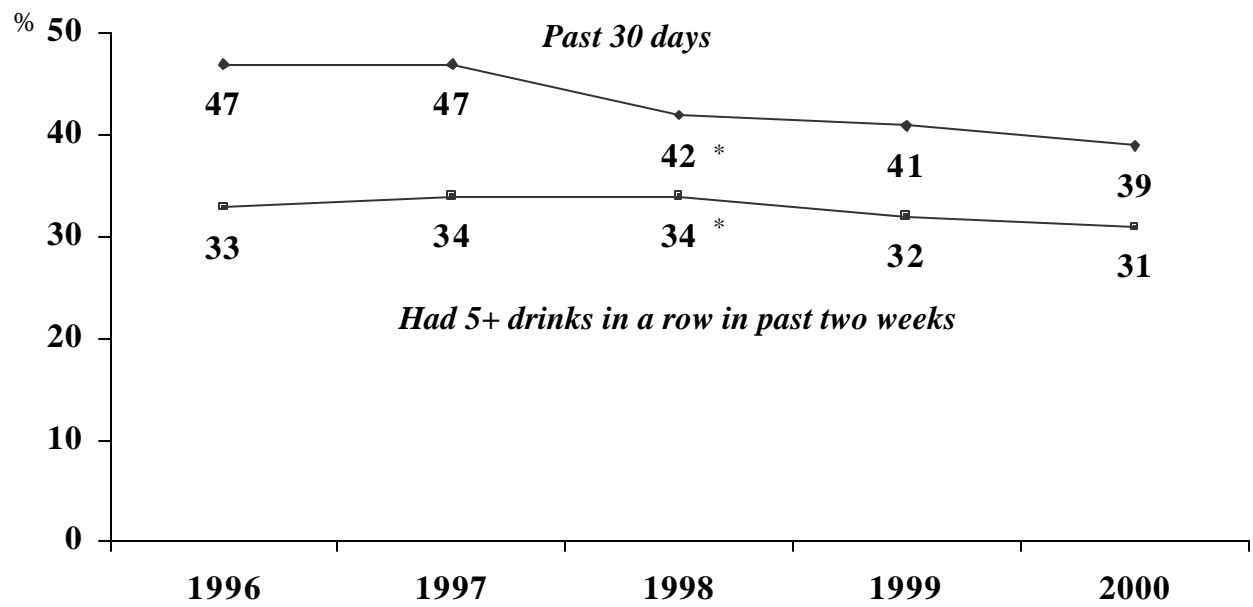
In 2000, 39 percent of teens said they had used alcohol in the past 30 days; that's down significantly from 42 percent in 1998 and stable compared to 1999 (41 percent). Further, 31 percent of teens said they had consumed five or more drinks in a row at some time during the past two weeks – that's down significantly from 34 percent in 1998 and stable compared to 1999 (32 percent) (Illustration S).

Attitudes and Perceptions

PATS focuses on attitudes regarding illegal drugs, and to date has not questioned teens regarding their attitudes and perceptions toward alcohol. However, the Monitoring the Future study provides a look at these measures. The 1999 study found that only one in five (22 percent) of 12th graders associate great risk of harm with having one or two drinks nearly every day. Less than half of all 12th graders (43 percent) think there is great risk in having five or more drinks once or twice each weekend, and less than two-thirds of 12th graders (61 percent) think there is great risk in consuming four or five drinks nearly every day.¹³

¹³ 1999 Monitoring the Future

Teen Alcohol Use



* = significant difference from 2000 (95%)

Teens and Tobacco

As with alcohol, tobacco is legally “off-limits” to teens yet is widely used. The scientifically established risks of smoking are now well known, but tobacco remains among the most popular drugs in America, both among adults and adolescents.

Use

The Partnership Attitude Tracking Study provides evidence that efforts to reduce teen smoking are making a difference: In 2000, 34 percent of teens reported using cigarettes in the past 30 days, down significantly from both 1998 (42 percent) and 1999 (37 percent) (Illustration T).

Attitudes and Perceptions

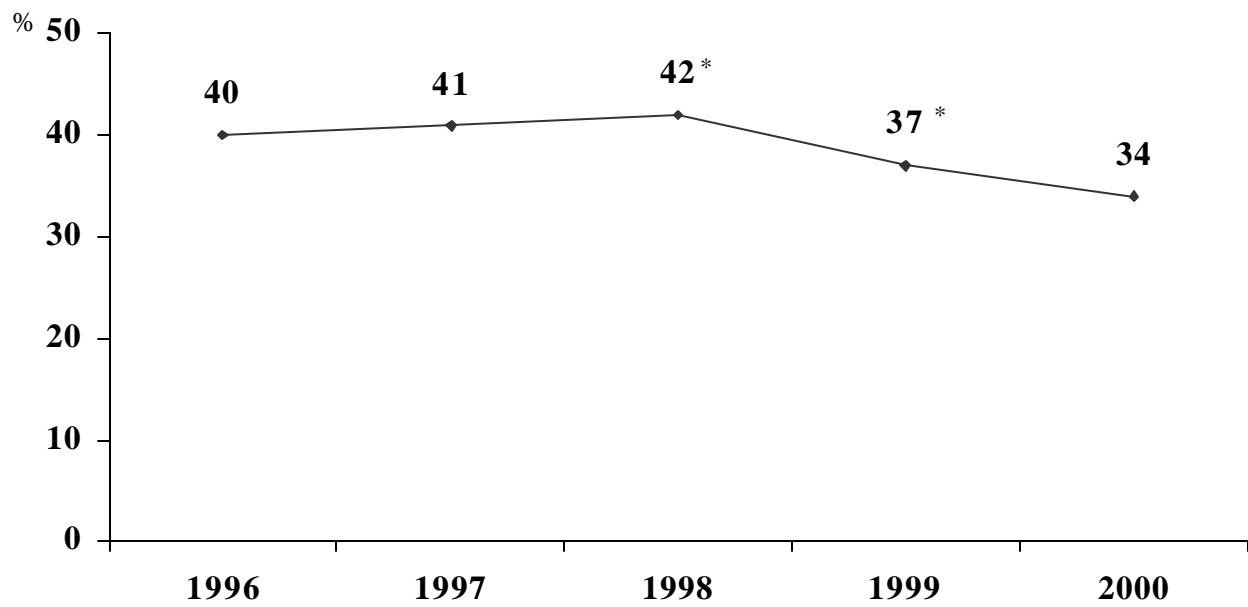
PATS focuses on attitudes regarding illegal drugs, and to date has not questioned teens regarding their attitudes and perceptions toward tobacco. However, the Monitoring the Future study provides a look at these measures. For example, the 1999 study found more than two-thirds of all 12th graders (71 percent) judge smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day as entailing great risk of harm for the user.¹⁴

Despite the generally strong anti-tobacco attitudes, far too many teens are continuing to experiment with and become addicted to tobacco. According to the American Legacy Foundation, 6,000 young people a day try a cigarette, and 3,000 a day become daily users.¹⁵ For this reason, several efforts to drive down the level of youth tobacco use are underway, including a multi-million dollar media effort funded by the November 1998 Master Settlement Agreement in which a coalition of 46 state Attorneys General successfully settled their cases with major tobacco companies for \$206 billion over the first 25 years.

¹⁴ 1999 Monitoring the Future

¹⁵ American Legacy Foundation

Teen Cigarette Use



* = significant difference from 2000 (95%)

Impact of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign

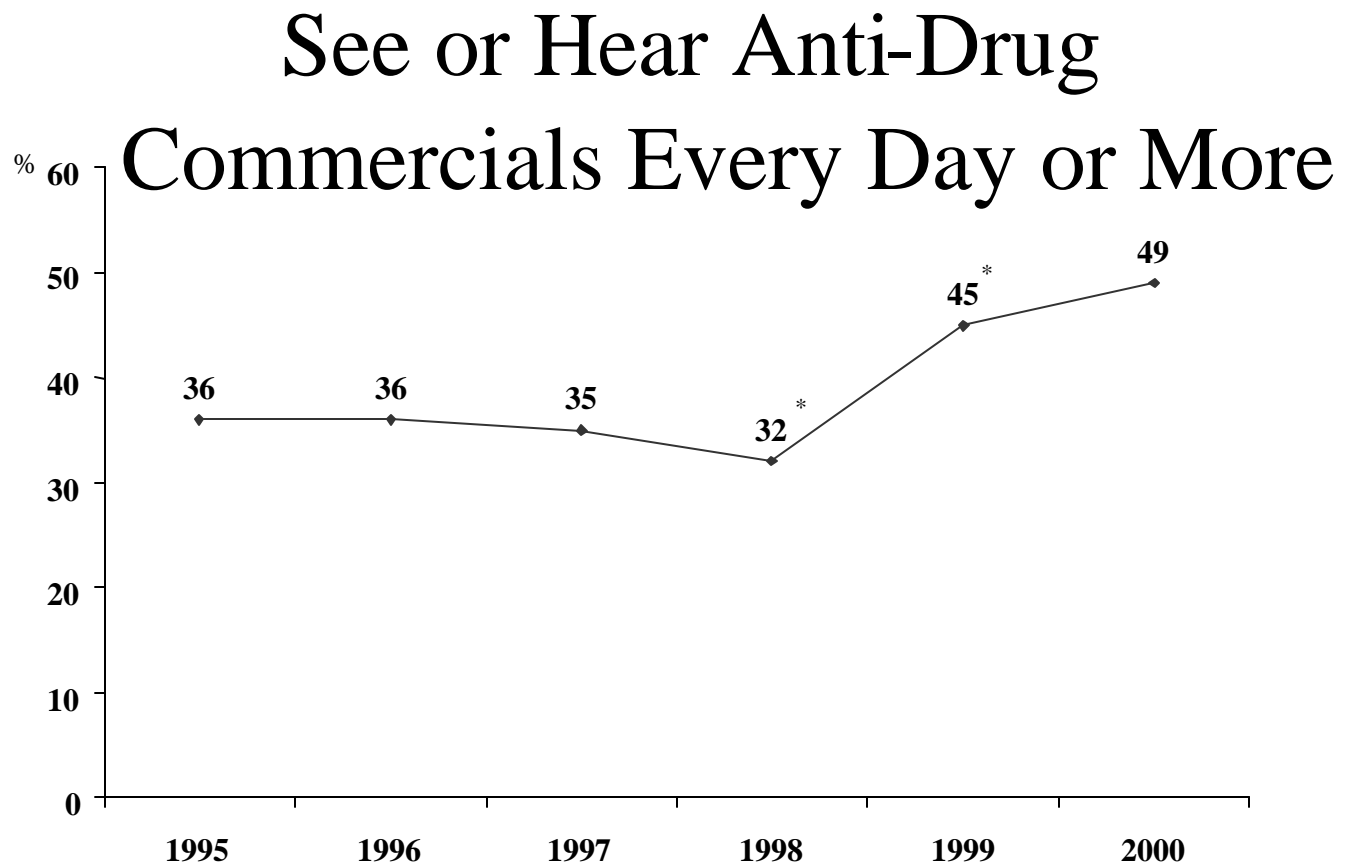
The 2000 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study is the second wave of PATS research conducted following the launch of an unprecedented public-private sector initiative. Launched nationally in July 1998, the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign has used a multi-million dollar advertising campaign to dissuade teenagers from using drugs, particularly marijuana, which is the most widely consumed illegal drug. This campaign is coordinated by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, under the direction of General Barry McCaffrey, in cooperation with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America.®

While the campaign is multi-faceted, the core of the effort uses paid advertising exposure to deliver anti-drug messages. This effort is resonating with teenagers: the number of young people seeing or hearing anti-drug ads every day or more has jumped by 53 percent since 1998.

The advertising portion of the campaign targets adolescents and parents, with different messages focusing on risks, resistance skills, normative education and positive consequences of avoiding illegal drug use (since alcohol and tobacco are legally sold products, they have not been addressed in the campaign). Approximately 60 percent of the campaign's budget for ads goes for ads focusing on young people; approximately 40 percent goes to ads aimed at parents and those responsible for the welfare of children. Since marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug among children and teenagers in the United States, a large percentage of advertising in the campaign has been designed to educate adolescents about the dangers and risks of this particular drug. Regular use of marijuana among teens has declined by nine percent since the launch of the campaign, so progress has come in the area where the campaign has focused much of its resources.

Awareness of Anti-Drug Messages

PATS data show the campaign is reaching teens with anti-drug messages to encourage them to reject the use and abuse of illegal drugs. In 2000, the data indicate that the number of young people seeing or hearing anti-drug ads every day or more has jumped by 53 percent since 1998. Nearly half of all teens (49 percent) in 2000 reported seeing or hearing anti-drug commercials "every day or more," up significantly from 32 percent in 1998 and 45 percent in 1999 (Illustration U).



* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How frequently do you see or hear commercials or ads telling you about the risks of drugs?

Perceived Effect of Anti-Drug Messages

The number of teens reporting that anti-drug ads have made them more aware of the risks of using drugs (agree a lot) has increased by 26 percent since the campaign launched (from 31 percent in 1998 to 39 percent in 2000). The number of teens reporting that the ads have provided new information or told them things they didn't know about drugs has increased by 19 percent (from 31 to 37 percent), and the number of teens reporting the ads have made them less likely to try or use drugs has increased by 23 percent (from 30 percent to 37 percent) (Illustration V).

In addition, reported anti-drug attitudes are stronger among teens that report seeing more anti-drug ads. For example, teens who see anti-drug ads almost every day or more are more likely to believe that marijuana use will make their problems worse, lead to dropping out of school or cause them to miss out on the good things in life than teens who see anti-drug ads less frequently (Illustration W).

Increasing Role of Media as Source of Information

In 2000, the percentage of teens that said they've learned a lot about the risks of drugs from media sources including TV commercials, TV shows, news or movies, and the Internet was up significantly from 1998 – the last year PATS was conducted before the national launch of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign (Illustration X). Conversely, there has been no significant change since 1998 in the percentage of teens that report they've learned a lot about the risks of drugs from non-media sources (Illustration Y).

The Campaign and Anti-Drug Attitudes and Behaviors

Since the launch of the campaign, regular use of marijuana by teens has declined nine percent. Past year use is down three percent; trial use is down five percent. Along with significant changes in marijuana-related attitudes, these changes coincide with the launch of the campaign. While it is impossible to know exactly how much of the changes are the result of the advertising, it can conservatively be said the campaign is contributing to changes in the marketplace.

However, while the overall trends in teen drug use continue to be encouraging, PATS found small but statistically significant increases in adolescent use of Ecstasy, methamphetamine and inhalants. The media campaign – backed by an annual congressional appropriation of about \$190 million (about one percent of the federal drug budget) – currently does not place a significant portion of its ad budget behind these other substances. These increases need to be taken into careful consideration as the campaign moves forward.

Illustration V

Effects of Messages

% agree a lot that ads...	1997	1998	1999	2000
Made you more aware of the risks of using drugs	33	31*	36*	39
Made you less likely to try or use drugs	31	30*	35*	37
Given you new information or told you things you didn't know about drugs	31	31*	33*	37
Encouraged you to talk to someone about the risks of using drugs	24	24*	26	28

* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How much do you agree or disagree that these commercials or ads have...?

Anti-Drug Attitudes Stronger Among Teens Who See More Anti-Drug Ads

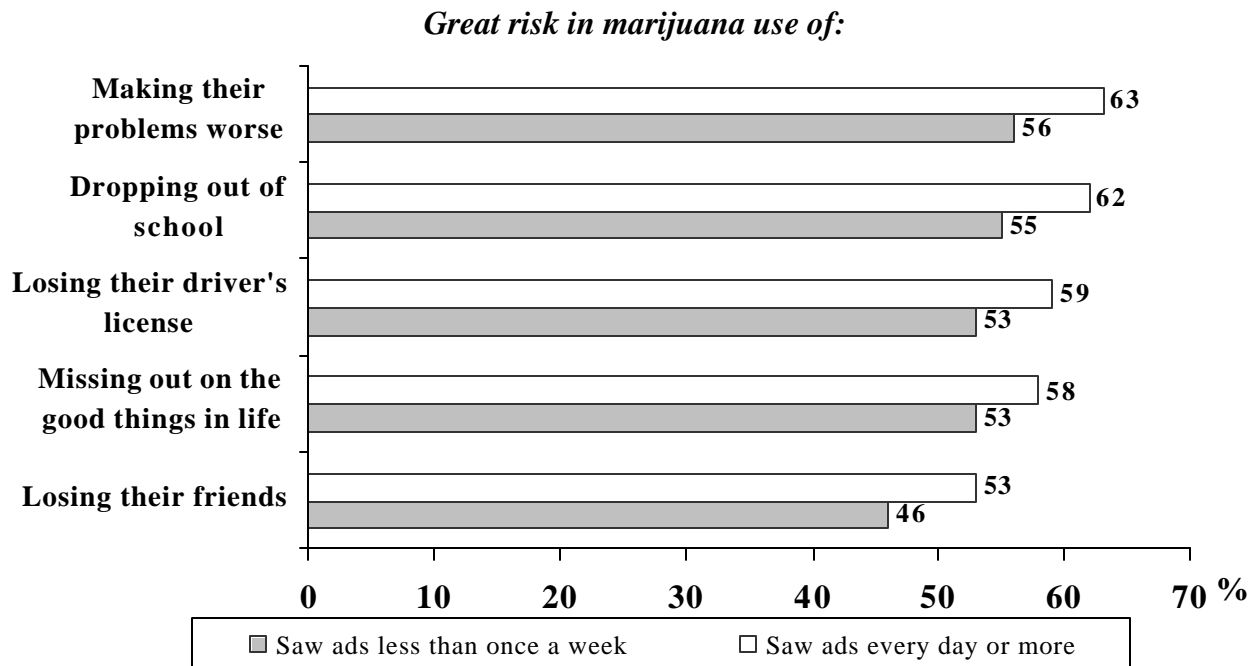


Illustration X

Media Sources of Information

% learned a lot about risks of drugs from...	1998	1999	2000
TV shows, news, movies	26*	28	29
TV commercials	20*	25	26
The Internet	13*	15*	17
Print ads in newspapers or magazines	16	15	16
Outdoor billboards	12*	13	15
Transit posters	11*	11*	13
Radio	10*	13	12
Home video rentals	12	12	12
Comic books	6	7	7

* = significant difference vs. 2000 at .05 level

How much have you learned about the risks of drugs from each of the following?

Illustration Y

Non-Media Sources of Information

% learned a lot about risks of drugs from...	1998	1999	2000
School	44	42	44
Parents or grandparents	27	30	29
Friends	28	28	29
On the street	20	19	20
School posters	20	20	20
Brother/sister	15	16	17

How much have you learned about the risks of drugs from each of the following?

Teens, Drugs and the Internet

Since 1998, the number of teens who report using the Internet to find information on drugs has jumped by 38 percent (22 percent of teens reported using the Internet to find information on drugs in 2000, up significantly from 16 percent in 1998).

The percentage of teens exposed to anti-drug sites has increased by 50 percent since 1998; the percentage exposed to pro-drug sites has increased by 38 percent over the same period. Among teens that have come across drug-related Web sites, 36 percent in 2000 reported seeing sites that discourage illegal drug use (up significantly from 24 percent in 1998), while 33 percent reported seeing sites that support drug use (up significantly from 24 percent in 1998).

The number of teens that say they've learned at least a little about drugs from the Internet climbed 32 percent since 1998. In 2000, nearly half of all teens (45 percent) reported they had learned at least a little about drugs from the Internet (up significantly from 34 percent in 1998).

Conclusions and Implications

Overall drug use among teens is down significantly since 1997. Marijuana use – which by and large represents the bulk of teen drug use in America – is continuing an encouraging downward trend, and teen anti-marijuana attitudes are continuing to slowly, but steadily, improve.

However, a small but increasing number of teens is increasingly using other drugs – for example, Ecstasy use alone has doubled since 1995. While the overall percentage of teens trying and using illegal drugs other than marijuana remains relatively low when compared to marijuana, alcohol and tobacco, these increases should not be ignored.

The shifts in teen drug attitudes and behaviors coincide with the launch of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, coordinated by the Office of National Drug Control Policy in cooperation with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America.[®] Since its national launch in June 1998, the campaign has focused largely on marijuana, and as teens have reported increased exposure to the campaign's anti-drug messages, marijuana use has fallen and anti-marijuana attitudes have improved. These changes speak to the power of paid advertising to influence consumers. Drugs not addressed specifically in the campaign with significant media weight have ticked upward. These shifts must be taken into careful consideration.

With so much deemed ineffective in the fight against drugs, a program such as the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign needs to be maintained. The campaign's federal appropriation of about \$190 million per year represents just one percent of the federal drug budget. Given the potential return on investment – reduced drug use and lower future rates of addiction – this effort may prove to be the most cost-effective drug-prevention program ever funded by the government. To be such will require the continued support of the federal government.

Drug use can be reduced among children. Media communication can be deployed to achieve this objective. But drug use prevention efforts are an on-going necessity, not an occasional tactical option. That much is certain, as is this: The need for drug education will remain constant so long as there are new generations of children growing up who need to learn about the dangers of illegal drugs before they are faced with a decision to use these dangerous substances.

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In addition, page 8 contains a chart from Audits and Surveys Worldwide that is used for purposes of comparing the Partnership Attitude Tracking Study with the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future study.